

# From the Upper Chamber



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## Report for Thursday, February 7, 2008

The thirteenth day of the 2008 legislative session was called to order by Lieutenant Governor **Casey Cagle**.

Senator **Don Balfour** of the 9<sup>th</sup> stated that the journal had been read and was found to be correct.

Senate Bills 417-428, Senate Resolutions 822 and 827, and House Bills 387, 1033 and 1089, were read for the first time and assigned to committees. The clerk then read the reports of standing committees and second readers.

Following the morning roll call, Lt. Gov **Cagle** informed the Senate of the passing of former Senator **Jim Whitehead, Sr.**'s brother, **Billy Whitehead**.

Sen. **Ross Tolleson** of the 20<sup>th</sup> led the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then introduced the *Chaplain of the Day*, Dr. **Frank Wood**, pastor of Dudley Baptist Church, who led the Senate in the daily devotional.

Sen. **Cecil Staton** of the 18<sup>th</sup> took the rostrum to introduce the *Doctor of the Day*, Dr. **John J. Rogers** of Forsyth.

SR 823-825 and 828-830, were read and adopted.

Sen. **Gail Davenport** of the 44<sup>th</sup> took the well on a Point of Personal Privilege to recognize and honor the life of Mr. **Wade Starr, Sr.**

Sen. **Judson Hill** of the 32<sup>nd</sup> took the well on a Point of Personal Privilege to introduce his father-in-law, **Fred Duffer**, seated in the Senate Gallery.

Senators **Johnny Grant** of the 25<sup>th</sup> and **Staton** took the well on Points of Personal Privilege to recognize the Jones County Leadership Class seated in the Senate Gallery.

The Local Consent Calendar, consisting of HB 820, 821, 995, 1002 and 1039, passed by a vote of 52 to 0.

Sens. **Seth Harp** of the 29<sup>th</sup> and **Ed Harbison** of the 15<sup>th</sup> took the rostrum on Points of Personal Privilege to recognize the Columbus Youth Advisory Council seated in the Senate Gallery.

The clerk read SB 340, which prohibits local governments from enacting, adopting, implementing or enforcing sanctuary policies. Sen. **Chip Pearson** of the 51<sup>st</sup> took the well to present the bill. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Regina Thomas** of the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The clerk read Amendment 1, by Sen. **Chip Rogers** of the 21<sup>st</sup>, which requires local governments to report the immigration status of employees by July 1, 2008. Sen. **Rogers** took the well to explain his amendment.

Amendment 1 was adopted unanimously.

SB 340 was passed by a vote of 45 to 8.

SB 347 was read. The bill allows software to be considered an asset when determining the financial condition of the insurer. Sen. **Ralph Hudgens** of the 47<sup>th</sup> took the well to discuss the legislation.

The clerk read Amendment 1, by Sen. **Steve Thompson** of the 33<sup>rd</sup>, which makes the increasing the number of rate filings available to the public. Sen. **Thompson** of the 33<sup>rd</sup> took the well to explain his amendment.

Sen. **Hudgens** took the well to object to the Amendment and request that it be withdrawn, and introduced as separate legislation. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Thompson** of the 33<sup>rd</sup>.

Sen. **Thompson** of the 33<sup>rd</sup> took the well again to state that he would withdraw the amendment.

Sen. **Thompson** of the 33<sup>rd</sup> moved that the amendment be withdrawn.

There was no objection, and Amendment 1 was withdrawn.

SB 347 passed by a vote of 54 to 0.

SR 828, which recognizes the Georgia Watermelon Queen, was read and adopted.

Sen. **Joseph Carter** of the 13<sup>th</sup> took the rostrum to speak to the resolution and introduce the Watermelon Queen to the Senate. He also recognized the Crisp County Leadership Class seated in the Senate Gallery.

Sen. **John Douglas** of the 17<sup>th</sup> took the well to recognize a group of students Spalding County seated in the Senate Gallery.

The clerk read SB 355, which defines the forms of payment that a settlement agent must receive prior to making a disbursement. Sen. **Preston Smith** of the 52<sup>nd</sup> took the well to present the bill and Amendment 1, which allows certain forms of payment to be accepted if funds are immediately available.

He yielded to questions from Sen. **Thompson** of the 33<sup>rd</sup>.

Amendment 1 to the Committee Substitute was adopted unanimously.

SB 355 passed by Committee Substitute by a vote of 53 to 1.

The clerk read SB 364, which reclassifies ratite products, or large flightless birds such as ostrich, as poultry rather than livestock.

Sen. **John Bulloch** of the 11<sup>th</sup> took the well to explain the bill. He yielded to questions from President Pro Tempore **Eric Johnson** of the 1<sup>st</sup>.

SB 364 passed by a vote of 51 to 0.

The clerk read SB 350, which increases penalties for anyone who drives in Georgia without a valid driver's license, and requires new residents of Georgia to obtain a Georgia driver's license within thirty days of moving to Georgia. This bill was vetoed by the Governor last year. Sen. **John Wiles** of the 37<sup>th</sup> took the well to explain the bill.

He yielded to questions from Sens. **Thomas** of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, **Emanuel Jones** of the 10<sup>th</sup>, **David Adelman** of the 42<sup>nd</sup> and **Thompson** of the 33<sup>rd</sup>.

Sen. **Jones** took the well to speak to the bill. He is concerned how this bill has unintended consequences, such as racial profiling.

Sen. **Ronald Ramsey** of the 43<sup>rd</sup> took the well to speak in support to the bill.

Sen. **Gloria Butler** of the 55<sup>th</sup> took the well to speak in opposition to the bill. She is also concerned this bill will enable racial profiling and costs will increase for jails.

SB 350 passed by a vote of 38 to 13.

Following the announcements, Majority Leader **Tommie Williams** of the 19<sup>th</sup> moved the Senate stand adjourned until 9:00 a.m., Friday, February 8.

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